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***NAPOLITANO DELIVERS VISION FOR ARIZONA'S FUTURE***  
***Gives Sixth Annual State of the State Address***

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano today laid out her vision for Arizona's future, issuing a bold call for the state's leaders to keep up the positive momentum Arizona has built, even while confronting budgetary challenges.

The Governor delivered her sixth annual State of the State address on the floor of the Arizona House of Representatives today. Detailing the extensive progress Arizona has made in important areas over the past five years, the Governor also identified key new initiatives aimed at supporting the state's growth without raising taxes.

"Arizona is young and vital," the Governor told Arizonans. "Our extraordinary growth propels us toward a new, dynamic time of transition, where bold ideas can take root, and where we can fully embrace what it means to build our future."

Governor Napolitano laid out the story of Arizona's future in five main chapters:

- **Education**: Raising standards for our public schools so Arizona students are prepared for advanced education and the 21st Century workforce
- **Economic Prosperity and Research**: Continuing to invest in public-private partnerships that make Arizona a world leader in advanced technology and research
- **Public Safety**: Protecting Arizona by supporting law enforcement and cracking down on illegal smuggling of drugs and human beings
- **Transportation and Growth**: Developing transportation and state land plans to support our state's growth and create a dynamic Arizona for future generations
- **Health Care**: Expanding access to affordable health care.

Education is the first and most important chapter of Arizona's story. The Governor proposed the next steps necessary to ensure success education in Arizona, including:

- Raising the dropout age to 18
- Creating the Centennial Scholars program to help high-achieving high school graduates in 2012 and beyond attend in-state colleges and universities for free
- Calling for a "fixed" tuition for four years when a student begins school at an Arizona university
- Doubling the number of bachelor's degrees granted by Arizona universities by 2020.

“Our education system is linked to the needs of Arizona’s economic future,” Governor Napolitano said. She then, in the second chapter of her speech, further detailed her plan to make Arizona a world leader in high-tech, high-knowledge industries, while protecting Arizonans’ investments during times of economic uncertainty. Those plans include:

- Supporting the Arizona Economic Resources Organization
- Appointing former Arizona Congressman Jim Kolbe to lead the effort to update Arizona’s ports of entry, and to continue to build international trade relationships
- Protecting homebuyers through a three-part plan that includes the Homebuyers’ Bill of Rights, Home Equity Theft Protection Act and the licensing of loan officers.

In the third chapter of her address, Napolitano discussed the effect of a federal government that continues to fail to address illegal immigration: “Until there is comprehensive immigration reform by the federal government, we will have to deal with those problems,” she explained to Arizonans. She then asked the Legislature to:

- Redirect RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) money to law enforcement needs and to employer sanctions enforcement
- Pass legislation to authorize the “3-in-1” ID for Arizona
- Target drop houses and more effectively punish the middlemen renting to smugglers.

The clear goal is to continue to interrupt the smuggling of drugs and human beings. “No IDs, no money, no cars, no drop houses – that’s how we will ultimately put an end to this savage industry in Arizona,” Napolitano said.

During the speech, Governor Napolitano also addressed one of the awful legacies of drug abuse – its prevalence among clients of the child welfare system. The Governor issued an executive order today, redirecting state agency’s substance abuse prevention and treatment dollars, so that those families within the Child Protective Services system are first in line to receive those services.

Arizona remains one of the fastest growing states in the country. Governor Napolitano used Chapter Four to call on the Legislature to help create an important legacy for Arizona by:

- Referring a statewide transportation plan to the ballot in 2008 or 2009 and state trust land reform to the ballot this year
- Supporting Arizona’s ability to grow and prosper by addressing minimum state standards for energy efficient construction, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and conservation

“We all have to be on the same page,” the Governor said. “We are many communities, but we are One Arizona, and we must work together so our story for the future reflects that.”

The Governor’s last chapter was directed to the health of Arizona families, especially children. She identified cost-neutral approaches to help families provide insurance for their children, including:

- KidsShare – a health insurance program for children that parents can purchase at full cost
- Raising the age of health care dependency to 25 years old
- Requiring insurance companies to help consumers by providing cost data to the state

In closing, the Governor announced that she would present the State Legislature with a balanced budget proposal for fiscal year 2009 that would not raise taxes and would not cut vital services. “This is a powerful narrative, one of progress, action and success. It is not one we can allow to be cut short because of a temporary economic condition,” Governor Napolitano said.

To back up her ideas with immediate action, the Governor issued 10 executive orders to allow key work to move forward starting today. “In this competitive and fast-moving world, we must continue to write our own story; otherwise, we give in and allow it to be written for us.”

The full text of Governor Napolitano’s State of the State address, as well as the executive orders issued today, is available on her Web site, [www.azgovernor.gov](http://www.azgovernor.gov).

Also available on the Governor’s Web site are summaries of key initiatives announced by the Governor today:

- Summary of the Centennial Scholars plan
- Summary of the three-part Plan to Protect Future Homebuyers
- Summary of the Governor’s plan to target drop houses and redirect RICO funds
- Summary of the Arizona “3-in-One” driver’s license
- Summary of KidShare
- Summary of the expanded dependency health care proposals
- Summary of the consolidation and elimination of commissions, boards and agencies